

# FINAL Little Mountain Activity Plan and Off-Highway Vehicle (OHV) Route Designations

WY020-EA05-49



Wyoming State Office – Cody Field Office



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**MISSION STATEMENT**

It is the mission of the Bureau of Land Management to sustain the health, diversity, and productivity of the public lands for the use and enjoyment of present and future generations.

**BLM/WY/PL-07/002+1220**

**WY-020-EA05-49**

## **ABBREVIATIONS**

ACEC	Area of Critical Environmental Concern
AMP	Allotment Management Plan
ATV	All Terrain Vehicle
AO	Authorized Officer
BLM	Bureau of Land Management
C& MU	Classification & Multiple Use
CFR	Code of Federal Regulations
DEQ	Department of Environmental Quality
DR	Decision Record
EA	Environmental Assessment
EIS	Environmental Impact Statement
ESA	Endangered Species Act
FLPMA	Federal Lands Policy and Management Act
FOIA	Freedom of Information Act
FONSI	Finding Of No Significant Impact
FR	Federal Register
GIS	Geographic Information System
GPS	Global Positioning System
HMP	Habitat Management Plan
IM	Instruction Memorandum
LWCF	Land and Water Conservation Fund
NEPA	National Environmental Policy Act
NHPA	National Historic Preservation Act
OHV	Off-Highway Vehicle
ORV	Off-Road Vehicle
RMP	Resource Management Plan
RMZ	Recreation Management Zone
ROD	Record of Decision
ROS	Recreation Opportunity Spectrum
R/W	Right of Way
S&G	Standards and Guidelines
SHPO	State Historic Preservation Office
SRMA	Special Recreation Management Area
SRP	Special Recreation Permit
T&E	Threatened and Endangered
TPL	Trust for Public Lands
USFWS	United States Fish and Wildlife Service
VRM	Visual Resource Management
WG&FD	Wyoming Game & Fish Department
WYNDD	Wyoming Natural Diversity Database

## TABLE OF CONTENTS

INTRODUCTION .....	1
PURPOSE AND NEED.....	2
SPECIAL DESIGNATIONS .....	3
AREA OF CRITICAL ENVIRONMENTAL CONCERN (ACEC).....	3
SPECIAL RECREATION MANAGEMENT AREA (SRMA) .....	3
WILD AND SCENIC RIVERS .....	5
OTHER RESOURCES IN THE PLANNING AREA .....	5
COMPREHENSIVE TRAVEL MANAGEMENT .....	5
SPECIAL DESIGNATIONS AND OTHER RESOURCES ACTIVITY PLAN .....	7
LITTLE MOUNTAIN ACEC .....	7
<i>RMP Objectives and Management Actions</i> .....	7
Cultural and Paleontological Resource Management .....	7
Fire Management .....	7
Hazardous Materials and Wastes Management .....	8
Lands and Realty Management .....	8
Livestock Grazing Management .....	8
Minerals Management .....	8
Off-Road Vehicle Management .....	9
Recreation Management .....	9
Visual Resource Management .....	9
Wildlife and Fish Habitat Management .....	9
Other Resource Management .....	10
Action Items .....	10
FIVE SPRINGS FALLS ACEC .....	12
<i>RMP Objectives and Management Actions</i> .....	13
Cultural and Paleontological Resource Management .....	13
Fire Management .....	13
Forest Management .....	13
Hazardous Materials and Wastes Management .....	13
Lands and Realty Management .....	13
Livestock Grazing Management .....	14
Minerals Management .....	14
Off-Road Vehicle Management .....	14
Recreation Management .....	14
Vegetation Management .....	14
Visual Resource Management .....	14
Wildlife and Fish Habitat Management .....	15
Other Resource Management .....	15
Action Items .....	15
WEST SLOPE SRMA .....	16
<i>RMP Objectives and Management Actions</i> .....	16
Recreation Management .....	16
Action Items .....	16
WORLAND CAVES SRMA .....	19
<i>RMP Objectives and Management Actions</i> .....	19
Worland District Cave Management Plan .....	19
Action Items .....	20
WILD AND SCENIC RIVERS .....	21
<i>RMP Objectives and Management Actions</i> .....	21
Interim Management Prescriptions .....	21
Action Items .....	21
OTHER RESOURCES .....	21
<i>Wildlife and Fish Habitat RMP Objectives and Management Actions</i> .....	22

West Slope Habitat Management Plan.....	22
Action Items .....	23
<i>Livestock Grazing Management RMP Objectives and Management Actions.....</i>	23
Allotment Management Plans (AMPs) and Standards and Guideline Evaluations (S&Gs).....	23
Action Items .....	25
<i>Cultural and Paleontological Resources RMP Objectives and Management Actions .....</i>	25
Action Items .....	25
<b>TRAVEL MANAGEMENT ACTIVITY PLAN .....</b>	<b>26</b>
<b>RMP OBJECTIVES AND MANAGEMENT ACTIONS .....</b>	<b>26</b>
<b>TRAVEL MANAGEMENT GOALS AND OBJECTIVES .....</b>	<b>27</b>
<b>ROUTE SELECTION CRITERIA .....</b>	<b>27</b>
<b>ACTION ITEMS .....</b>	<b>29</b>
Maps .....	29
Signs and Markers .....	30
Education and Information .....	32
Barriers .....	32
Rehabilitation.....	32
Monitoring .....	34
Enforcement.....	36
Maintenance.....	37
Implementation .....	37
Specific Projects .....	39
Projects to be implemented upon approval of this plan: .....	39
Project ideas for future consideration: .....	41
<b>MAPS.....</b>	<b>42</b>
<b>FIGURES .....</b>	<b>42</b>
<b>TABLES.....</b>	<b>42</b>
<b>APPENDIX 1.....</b>	<b>43</b>

## **Introduction**

This plan will serve as a comprehensive access and travel management plan for the Little Mountain area on the West Slope of the Bighorn Mountains. The Little Mountain planning area is located east of Lovell, Wyoming. The area consists of 69,044 acres of Bureau of Land Management (BLM) administered public land located in Big Horn County, north of U.S. Highway Alternate 14, south of the Crow Indian Reservation and the Montana state line, east of the Bighorn Canyon National Recreation Area, and west of the Bighorn National Forest. The planning area is shown in Figure 1, below.

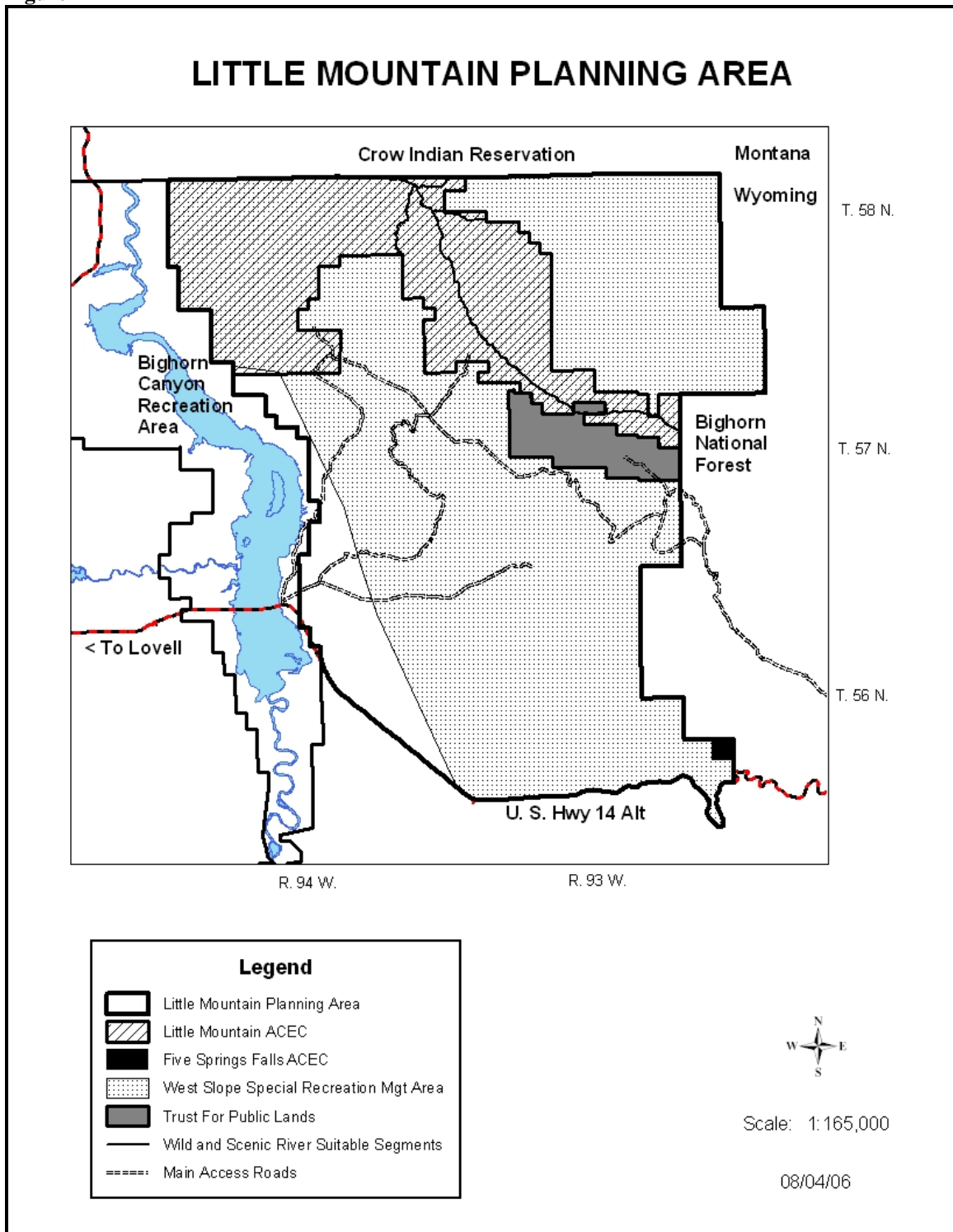
A land acquisition, completed in 2003, from the Trust for Public Land (TPL) increased the acreage of public land in this area. Visitor use has increased over the past few years, and this trend is expected to continue. Identification of designated routes for off-highway vehicles (OHVs), identification and assessment of non-motorized recreation opportunities, and development of facilities to accommodate increasing use levels is critical to effectively manage the area. Little Mountain provides opportunities for a wide variety of recreation activities such as horseback riding, hiking, mountain biking, hunting, fishing, caving, and sightseeing.

OHV recreation is becoming more popular and the public is increasingly looking to BLM- administered public lands throughout the west for OHV recreation and a variety of other recreation opportunities. This trend is expected to continue locally as population and tourism within the BLM Cody Field Office area and surrounding communities continues to increase. In addition, advancements in technology have allowed increasing motorized access to previously inaccessible areas. Management of OHVs on BLM-managed public lands is necessary to address public and administrative access needs, protect resources, promote public safety, and minimize conflicts among the various uses of public lands.

The Cody Resource Management Plan (RMP), completed in 1990, provides management direction for all BLM-managed public lands and resources within the planning area. Subsequent activity level planning is completed to implement the decisions that were made in the RMP. This activity plan will outline a specific course of action to implement the RMP decisions associated with OHV management and other special area designations within the planning area.

For many years the term “off-highway vehicle” (OHV) has been used by the public, industry, and the BLM interchangeably with the term “off-road vehicle” (ORV). The term “off-road vehicle” was used during the previous BLM resource management planning process. Both terms are consistent with the legally established definition in the Presidential Executive Orders and the BLM's related 43 Code of Federal Regulations (CFR) 8340. The terms will be used interchangeably in this planning process.

Figure 1



## Purpose and Need

The purpose of the Little Mountain Activity Plan is to define and document a specific course of action necessary to implement the ORV designation decision of “limited to designated roads and trails” in the Little Mountain area. The plan outlines on-the-ground

actions and guidance that will facilitate an effective implementation process. The Little Mountain area has been identified as a priority for implementation of the ORV designation decisions due to various special management designations in the area, the recent Devil's Canyon Ranch land acquisition, and increasing recreation use and public interest. The Little Mountain Activity Plan, Environmental Assessment (EA) and an associated Decision Record (DR) will implement the Cody Resource Management Plan (RMP) ORV decisions by identifying, analyzing, and designating specific routes open for travel and approving the implementation actions outlined in this activity plan.

The planning area also includes the Little Mountain Area of Critical Environmental Concern (ACEC), the Five Springs Falls ACEC, a portion of the West Slope Special Recreation Management Area (SRMA), a portion of the Worland Caves SRMA, suitable Wild and Scenic River segments, and recently acquired lands on Little Mountain, formerly the Devil's Canyon Ranch lands. Preparation of this activity plan will meet the direction contained in the Cody RMP to complete activity plans for ACECs and SRMAs. Planning is needed to integrate management of multiple resources and activities on the mountain such as management of the special area designations, travel management and access, future development of recreation facilities, implementation of range improvements, hazardous fuels reduction projects, and management of crucial winter range and other important fish and wildlife habitat.

## **Special Designations**

### **Area of Critical Environmental Concern (ACEC)**

An area is designated as an ACEC when special management attention is required to protect specific relevant and important values, or to provide public safety from natural hazards. These values can include important historic, cultural, or scenic values, fish and wildlife resources or other natural systems or processes.

Two ACECs that are within the Little Mountain planning area were designated in 1990 as part of the approved Cody RMP. The Little Mountain ACEC was designated to protect and manage important cave, cultural, and paleontological resources, and to maintain scenic values. The Five Springs Falls ACEC was designated to protect existing populations of four near-endemic rare and sensitive plant species in the Five Springs Falls area.

### **Special Recreation Management Area (SRMA)**

An area is designated as an SRMA to direct recreation funding and personnel to fulfill commitments made to provide specific structured recreation opportunities (i.e., activity, experience, and benefit opportunities). Both land use plan decisions and subsequent implementing actions for recreation in each SRMA are geared to a strategically identified primary market (destination, community, or undeveloped).

Two SRMAs that were designated in 1990 as part of the approved Cody RMP are partially within the Little Mountain planning area. The West Slope SRMA was designated to recognize the unique recreation opportunities available on the west slope of



the Bighorn Mountains. The entire West Slope SRMA covers about 101,000 acres of BLM-managed public lands in Wyoming from the Montana state line south to Shell Creek. This activity plan will address only the portion of the West Slope SRMA north of U.S. Highway 14 Alternate. The Worland Caves SRMA was designated to recognize important caves and cave passages within the Cody and Worland BLM Field Office areas. This activity plan will address only the portion of the Worland Caves SRMA within the Little Mountain planning area.

Washington Office Instruction Memorandum (IM) No. 2006-060, "Incorporating Benefits-Based Management within Recreation and Visitor Services Program Policy Changes" was issued on January 5, 2006. This IM affirms BLM's commitment to the program planning and management direction outlined in "The BLM's Priorities for Recreation and Visitor Services" and the policy for management planning and plan implementation contained in Appendix C and D of the Land Use Planning Handbook (H-1601-1).

The new land use planning guidance requires identification of the primary recreation-tourism market, the corresponding recreation management strategy (destination, community, or undeveloped), and recreation management zones (RMZs) for each SRMA. The following are specific land use allocation decisions associated with the RMZs:

- Identifying the recreation niche.
- Writing explicit recreation management objectives for the specific recreation opportunities to be produced and the activity, experience, and benefit outcomes to be attained.
- Prescribing recreation setting character conditions necessary to produce the stated recreation opportunities, experiences and beneficial outcomes. The Recreation Opportunity Spectrum (ROS) will be used to describe the existing setting character and to prescribe the desired setting character.
- Developing an activity planning framework to address recreation management, marketing, monitoring, and administration.

Although the new planning requirements are primarily RMP level planning decisions, IM No. 2006-060 states that until the new guidance is incorporated into land use plans, Field Managers will assess and evaluate the effects of proposed projects in SRMAs on activities, experiences, beneficial outcomes and recreational setting character to ensure consistency with benefits based management concepts.

This activity plan will incorporate the concepts of benefits based management and the new guidance as appropriate to evaluate proposed implementation actions within the northern portion of the West Slope SRMA and the Worland Caves SRMA. The information compiled in this activity plan would also serve to outline some components of the conceptual framework for incorporation into the upcoming RMP revision that is scheduled to begin in 2007.

### **Wild and Scenic Rivers**

In 1992, the BLM Cody Field Office initiated the Wild and Scenic River Review for the Cody RMP planning area. The purpose of this review was to determine if any BLM-administered public lands along waterways within the RMP planning area meet the eligibility criteria and suitability factors as identified in the Wild and Scenic Rivers Act.

As a result of this review, BLM-administered public lands along Porcupine Creek, and the Deer Creek, Oasis Spring Creek, and Trout Creek tributaries to Porcupine Creek, were identified as meeting the Wild and Scenic River eligibility criteria and suitability factors. This determination was made based on the presence of outstandingly remarkable values relating to scenic, recreational, and cultural resources.

In 2003, interim management prescriptions were developed to provide interim protection of the Wild and Scenic River values on suitable waterway areas prior to completion of the Cody RMP revision. Until final decisions are made on the Wild and Scenic River eligibility and suitability determinations, no uses will be authorized which could impair any outstandingly remarkable values along river corridors or otherwise affect their eligibility for inclusion in the National Wild and Scenic Rivers System.

### **Other Resources in the Planning Area**

The Cody RMP provides management direction for all BLM-managed public lands and resources within the planning area. The predominant uses and resources in the Little Mountain planning area include recreation, wildlife, range, cultural, paleontological, visual resources, and minerals. Activity level planning has been completed related to wildlife habitat management and livestock grazing allotment management within the planning area. The management objectives and actions from the RMP and subsequent activity planning that are relevant to the Little Mountain planning area will be carried forward into this activity plan.

### **Comprehensive Travel Management**

A comprehensive approach to travel management recognizes that the roads and trails on BLM-managed public land serve multiple uses and help facilitate a variety of management objectives. Travel management decisions should be integrated with all BLM programs and resource use aspects (such as recreational, traditional, casual, agricultural, commercial, and educational) and accompanying modes and conditions of travel on the public lands.

In 2001, the National Management Strategy for Motorized Off-Highway Vehicle (OHV) Use on Public Lands was completed, and in 2002, the National Mountain Bicycling Strategic Action Plan was completed. These two strategies provide national guidance and have emphasized travel management as a priority for all BLM Field Offices. This priority was also emphasized by “The BLM’s Priorities for Recreation and Visitor Services” that was completed in May of 2003.

All BLM-managed public lands have ORV designations, in accordance with 43 CFR 8340 – Off Road Vehicles. The designation categories (as described in 43 CFR 8340.0-5 Definitions) include:

1. open – “...an area where all types of vehicle use is permitted at all times, anywhere in the area subject to the operating regulations and vehicle standards...”
2. limited – “...an area restricted at certain times, in certain areas, and/or to certain vehicular use. These restrictions may be of any type, but can generally be accommodated within the following type of categories: Numbers of vehicles; types of vehicles; time or season of vehicle use; permitted or licensed use only; use on existing roads and trails; use on designated roads and trails; and other restrictions.”
3. closed – “...an area where off-road vehicle use is prohibited. Use of off-road vehicles in closed areas may be allowed for certain reasons; however, such use shall be made only with the approval of the Authorized Officer.

The ORV designation decisions for the Cody Field Office were made in the Cody Resource Management Plan (RMP) in 1990 and in the amendment to the Cody RMP in 2000. The ORV management objective identified in the RMP is:

*“To maintain or enhance opportunities for Off Road Vehicle Use while protecting or avoiding adverse effects of vehicular travel on other resource values.”*

All BLM-managed public lands in the Cody Field Office area fall within one of the ORV categories of open, limited, or closed (Cody RMP map 9, pg. 31 and text on page 22). These categories can only be changed through the land use planning process by amendment or revision of the RMP. The designation decisions are implemented on the ground through site-specific planning efforts, subsequent to completion of the RMP.

The ORV designation for a majority of the 69,044 acre Little Mountain planning area is “limited to designated roads and trails.” This designation decision was determined during the RMP planning process through an assessment of the resource values related to roads, trails and ORV travel. The designation is intended to minimize impact to fragile soils, Class II visual resources, significant cultural and paleontological resources, and areas over important caves or cave passages. The decision is also consistent with the special management designations in the area, including the Little Mountain ACEC and the West Slope SRMA.

The ORV designation for 5,297 acres in the southwest portion of the Little Mountain planning area is “limited to existing roads and trails.”

The ORV designation for the 160 acre Five Springs Falls ACEC is “closed to vehicular use.” Vehicular travel in the area will be allowed only on the road to the Five Springs Falls campground.

## **Special Designations and Other Resources Activity Plan**

### **Little Mountain ACEC**

Approximately 22,270 acres is designated as the Little Mountain ACEC. The relevant and important values include karst topography, paleontological resources, and cultural resources. The caves in the area are nationally important, as are the diverse cultural resources. The karst topography has given researchers and recreational cavers vast subterranean areas to study and explore. Openings to these caves have trapped animals leading to preservation of a fossil record of previous inhabitants. The area also contains potential hazards from previous uranium mining activities. Management action is needed to protect and prevent irreparable damages to the resources and to promote safety and protect life from hazardous mine shafts and tailings (Cody RMP/Final EIS, p. 249).

### **RMP Objectives and Management Actions**

The objectives for management of the Little Mountain ACEC are to protect and manage important cave, cultural, and paleontological resources, and to maintain scenic values.

The following decisions were analyzed and approved in the Cody RMP for the Little Mountain ACEC and are identified for implementation during the life of this activity plan. These decisions do not apply to that portion of the Little Mountain Activity Plan area outside the boundaries of the ACEC.

### **Cultural and Paleontological Resource Management**

- An activity plan for the area will be developed to address management of significant cultural and paleontological resources and scenic values in the ACEC.
- Areas in the immediate vicinity of significant cultural and paleontological resource sites are avoidance areas for surface-disturbing activities.
- Class III cultural resource inventories will be conducted before surface-disturbing activities are authorized and before the use of prescribed fire. Adverse effects on cultural and paleontological resources will be mitigated or avoided.

### **Fire Management**

- The ACEC is a full suppression area for wildfire. However, the use of heavy equipment will be restricted over important caves and cave passages.

### **Hazardous Materials and Wastes Management**

- Hazardous Materials. For BLM-authorized activities that involve hazardous materials or their use, precautionary measures will be used to guard against releases or spills into the environment.
- Hazardous Wastes. Public land sites contaminated with hazardous wastes will be reported, secured, and cleaned up according to applicable federal and state regulations and contingency plans. Parties responsible for contamination will be liable for cleanup and resource damage costs as prescribed in federal and state regulations. The BLM will encourage and cooperate with the Wyoming Department of Environmental Quality (DEQ) to clean up and rehabilitate abandoned uranium mines, prospects, and tailings.
- Other Hazards. The BLM will provide warnings as appropriate and establish precautions regarding safety hazards associated with the use of any areas on BLM-administered public lands. For example, temporary fencing and signs will be erected at abandoned mines in the ACEC warning the public of health and safety hazards posed by radioactivity and uncovered mine entrances and adits.

### **Lands and Realty Management**

- Utility/Transportation Systems. The Little Mountain ACEC is an avoidance area for future rights-of-way. If rights-of-way through the ACEC will be required or the ACEC cannot reasonably be avoided, the effects of the right-of-way construction will be intensively mitigated.
- Withdrawals from locatable mineral entry and development will be initiated in the Little Mountain ACEC (about 3,560 acres).

### **Livestock Grazing Management**

- Livestock grazing will continue on the three grazing allotments in the ACEC. (Note, there are five grazing allotments in or partially in the ACEC, the RMP allotment boundaries were updated in the Cody Rangeland Program Summary Update; September 2005.)

### **Minerals Management**

- The ACEC is open to exploration and development of leasable minerals. Subject to application of the standard mitigation guidelines.
- About 528 acres over Horsethief and Natural Trap caves will be closed to locatable mineral exploration and development. Closures will also be established for lands above other important caves and cave passages that are identified in the future. Mineral withdrawals will be initiated to implement these closures.

- Existing Classification & Multiple Use (C&MU) segregations from locatable minerals exploration and development (about 3,277 acres) will remain in effect, until mineral withdrawals are completed for these closures.
- A plan of operations will be required for all locatable mineral exploration (except casual use) and development, including disturbances of 5 acres or less.

### **Off-Road Vehicle Management**

- Vehicular use in the ACEC is limited to designated roads and trails.

### **Recreation Management**

- A “no surface occupancy” restriction for leasable minerals exploration and development will be applied to about 528 acres above Natural Trap and Horsethief caves.
- Other surface-disturbing activities such as geophysical exploration (except casual use), salable minerals exploration and development, and road and reservoir construction will be prohibited over Natural Trap and Horsethief caves.
- Other important caves or cave passages identified in the future will be protected in the same manner. Visitor facilities for cavers will be constructed near caves as needed. Visitor services and cave patrols will be increased and interpretive and directional signs will be posted.
- The issuance of cave permits will be limited to ensure a “wild” experience for cave users. Permits will be required for entrance and gates will be locked on Horsethief, Titan, and Natural Trap caves. Use levels and other associated management prescriptions for these caves will be addressed in site specific cave management plans.
- Recreation management in the ACEC will be consistent with that of the West Slope SRMA.

### **Visual Resource Management**

- Visual resources will be managed for Class I, II and III VRM objectives.

### **Wildlife and Fish Habitat Management**

- Wildlife habitat management will be consistent with the objectives for the West Slope Habitat Management Plan (HMP) for management of crucial winter range for bighorn sheep, mule deer, and elk.
- During periods of severe winter weather, approval of the BLM will be required before snow can be removed from roads on BLM-administered lands in the big game crucial winter ranges in the ACEC. The purpose is to

minimize disturbance of the animals during periods when wildlife are under high stress.

- During raptor nesting periods, road construction and improvement will be avoided whenever possible within 0.75 mile of special status raptor species nest sites or the visual horizon of such nests, whichever is closer. The purpose is to limit increased mechanized vehicle use and related disturbances that could occur during the nesting period because of improved vehicle access. Surface-disturbing activities will be prohibited in these areas if they would result in the loss of an active special status raptor species nest or a structure on which such a nest is built, or if they would cause loss of significant portions of concentration, foraging, or nesting habitat for these raptors.
- Additional sage grouse lek site restrictions, nesting habitat seasonal restrictions, and protection of special habitats and uncommon and important habitat features are addressed in appendix B of the Cody RMP, “Wyoming Bureau of Land Management Standard Mitigation Guidelines for Surface-Disturbing Activities.

#### **Other Resource Management**

- All other resource values in the ACEC, that are not specifically mentioned, will be managed under the various provisions and management decisions of the Cody RMP, as they apply.
- See appendix B, of the Cody RMP for other restrictions that may be applied to surface-disturbing activities, as appropriate.

#### **Action Items**

##### **Maps**

- Develop confidential maps showing the avoidance areas for surface disturbing activities in the immediate vicinity of significant cultural and paleontological resources and the restricted areas for use of heavy equipment and no-surface occupancy over significant caves and cave passages. The maps and GIS coverage will be labeled as confidential and kept on file in the BLM Cody Field Office.
  - The maps are confidential pursuant to the Archaeological Resources Protection Act of 1979, as amended, which states: Confidentiality of archaeological resource information: Section 9 of ARPA states that information on the nature and location of archaeological resources on federal and Indian lands will not be made available to the public when disclosure will create a potential for harm to the resources. It also specifically exempts information on archaeological resources from Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) requests.

- The maps are confidential pursuant to the Federal Cave Resources Protection Act of 1988, which states: Confidentiality of information concerning nature and location of significant caves: In general – Information concerning the specific location of any significant cave may not be made available to the public under section 552 of title 5, United States Code, unless the Secretary determines that disclosure of such information would further the purposes of this Act and would not create a substantial risk of harm, theft, or destruction of such cave.
- Incorporate the boundaries of the areas closed to casual use near Titan and Lisbon (aka Dirty Beast) mines into the Official Travel Management Map and post the Federal Register Notice for this closure on the main entry point kiosks.

#### Signs and Markers

- Review and update all signs identifying the boundaries of the areas closed to casual use near the mines, and the boundaries of the withdrawal areas. This may include determining the appropriate sign locations on-the-ground, revising the sign wording, ordering new signs, and installing the signs.

#### Education and Information

- Pursue development of an interpretive plan for the historic and cultural values of the ACEC and Little Mountain. Provide information about the importance of winter range for game animals and sensitive habitats for other plant and wildlife species.
- Provide information about problems caused by noxious weeds, weed identification and notification procedures, and prevention practices for public land users.

#### Monitoring

- Develop specific monitoring requirements for the ACEC, including intervals and standards. Coordinate necessary monitoring actions with the BLM Cody Field Office resource specialists.

#### Specific Projects

- Continue to pursue funding for assessment of the historic cabins on Little Mountain through the BLM Budget Planning System (BPS). Upon completion of this project, cabins may be preserved as significant Historic Properties, interpreted, rehabilitated, removed, or released for other uses.
- Pursue volunteer participation in an adopt-a-cabin restoration program, after the assessments are complete
- Pursue partnership opportunities with universities and the Bighorn Canyon National Recreation Area, National Park Service to complete the historic



cabin assessment and assessment of known historic trails and other needed cultural and historic assessments.

- Continue to pursue BLM acquisition of the lands owned by the Trust for Public Land.
- Continue integrated weed control efforts in conjunction with recreational trail and road maintenance and grazing management programs.
- Ensure that all future right-of-way grants issued within the ACEC incorporate the necessary language regarding snow removal from roads on BLM-administered lands during periods of severe winter weather; coordinate this wording with the Field Office Wildlife Biologist.

#### Projects for Future Consideration

- During the upcoming revision of the Cody RMP, consider expanding the Little Mountain ACEC boundary to protect and manage additional important cave, cultural, and paleontological resources, and to maintain scenic values.
- During the upcoming revision of the Cody RMP, consider expanding the existing withdrawals to ensure protection of all known caves and cave passages.
- During the upcoming revision of the Cody RMP, consider closing the areas above Horsethief Cave, Natural Trap Cave and other known significant caves to oil and gas leasing and geophysical exploration.
- Conduct a review and assessment to determine the status of the mining claims, especially in areas near known caves, to determine the potential for Abandoned Mine Land (AML) rehabilitation projects within the Little Mountain planning area.
- Continue to pursue a withdrawal from the operation of the public land laws for the existing Classification & Multiple Use (C&MU) segregations from locatable mineral exploration and development (about 3,277 acres).

#### **Five Springs Falls ACEC**

Approximately 160 acres is designated as the Five Springs Falls ACEC. The relevant and important values are existing populations and habitat for the four near-endemic rare and sensitive plant species: Bighorn Fleabane (*Erigeron allocotus*), Cary beardtongue (*Penstemon caryi*), Princes plume var. tomentosa (*Stanleya tomentosa*), and Sullivantia (*Sullivantia hepemanii*). The Five Springs Falls area provides unique habitat for these plant species that are known to occur only in Wyoming and one other state. The unique habitat is composed of vertical cliff walls that are kept moist by spray from the waterfall. One major and one minor waterfall in a steep rocky canyon are popular public

recreational and visual attractions both locally and regionally. The Five Springs Falls Campground is located on the western edge of the ACEC. Management action is needed to provide a prescription for the management of recreation and surface-disturbing activities so as to prevent loss of sensitive plant life and preserve visual aesthetics. (Cody RMP/Final EIS, p. 248-249).

### **RMP Objectives and Management Actions**

The objective for management of the Five Springs Falls ACEC is to protect existing populations of four near-endemic rare and sensitive plant species in the Five Springs Falls area.

The following decisions were analyzed and approved in the Cody RMP for the Five Springs Falls ACEC and are identified for implementation during the life of this activity plan. These decisions do not apply to that portion of the Little Mountain Activity Plan area outside the boundaries of the ACEC.

### **Cultural and Paleontological Resource Management**

- Class III cultural resource inventories will be conducted before surface-disturbing activities are authorized. Adverse effects on significant cultural and paleontological resources will be mitigated or avoided.

### **Fire Management**

- The ACEC is a full suppression area for wildfire. Prescribed fire will be used as appropriate to accomplish multiple use management objectives as they are identified.

### **Forest Management**

- Forest resources in the Five Springs Falls area will be managed to emphasize native plant, wildlife, watershed, and recreation values.

### **Hazardous Materials and Wastes Management**

- Hazardous Materials. For activities on public lands that involve hazardous materials, precautionary measures, and contingency plans will be monitored for their effectiveness and to guard against releases of spills into the environment.
- Hazardous Wastes. Public land sites contaminated with hazardous wastes will be reported, secured, and cleaned up according to applicable federal and state regulations. Parties responsible for contamination will be liable for cleanup and resource damage costs as prescribed in federal and state regulations.
- Other Hazards. If hazards should be identified, the BLM will provide warnings as appropriate and establish precautions regarding safety hazards associated with the use of any areas on BLM-administered public land.

### **Lands and Realty Management**

- Access. Existing access in the ACEC will be retained. Additional access will not be acquired.

- Utility/Transportation Systems. The Five Springs Falls ACEC is designated an avoidance area for future rights-of-way. If rights-of-way through the ACEC will be required or the ACEC cannot reasonably be avoided, the effects of the right-of-way construction will be intensively mitigated.

### **Livestock Grazing Management**

- The occasional livestock grazing use that occurs in the area will continue. However, the Five Springs Falls Campground area (about 40 acres) is closed to livestock grazing. (The general area is used to trail livestock).

### **Minerals Management**

- The Five Springs Falls ACEC is open to exploration and development of leasable minerals. A “no surface occupancy” restriction will be applied to these activities.
- The ACEC is closed to future locatable mineral exploration and development. A protective withdrawal will be initiated to implement this closure. (Note: this withdrawal has not yet been completed, see action items below).
- For existing mining claims, a plan of operations will be required for all locatable mineral exploration (except casual use) and development, including disturbances of 5 acres or less.

### **Off-Road Vehicle Management**

- The ACEC will be closed to ORV use. Vehicular travel in the area will be allowed only on the road to the Five Springs Falls Campground.

### **Recreation Management**

- Recreation facilities at the Five Springs Falls Campground will be maintained. Interpretive signs will be used in the ACEC to explain the importance of protecting rare plants and their habitat.
- To protect rare plants, hiking will be limited to existing trails. Except for purposes of approved monitoring and research, no climbing will be allowed on the cliff that forms Five Springs Falls.

### **Vegetation Management**

- The ACEC is closed to surface-disturbing activities such as geophysical exploration (except casual use), salable minerals exploration and development, and construction activities (except those related to development of recreation or interpretation of rare plants).

### **Visual Resource Management**

- Visual resources will be managed for Class I VRM objectives (Cody RMP, appendix H).

### **Wildlife and Fish Habitat Management**

- Wildlife habitat management in the Five Springs Falls area will be consistent with the objectives of the West Slope HMP for management of mule deer crucial winter range.

### **Other Resource Management**

- All other resource values in the ACEC, that are not specifically mentioned, will be managed under the various provisions and management decisions of the Cody RMP, as they apply.
- See appendix B for other restrictions that may be applied to surface-disturbing activities, as appropriate.

### **Action Items**

#### **Signs and Markers**

- Review and update signing at Five Springs Falls Campground to ensure adequate directional, informational and regulatory signing is posted.

#### **Education and Information**

- Continue working with Northwest College to develop an interpretive plan and interpretive signs for the Five Springs Falls Campground to provide education to the public about the values of the ACEC, and historic, geologic, and riparian resources.
- Pursue additional partnership opportunities with schools and community groups to enhance the interpretive efforts in the Five Springs Falls Campground and ACEC area.
- Provide information about problems caused by noxious weeds, weed identification and notification procedures, and prevention practices for public land users.

#### **Monitoring**

- Develop specific monitoring requirements for the ACEC, including intervals and standards. Coordinate necessary monitoring actions with the BLM Cody Field Office resource specialists.

#### **Specific Projects**

- Continue with road maintenance efforts for the Five Springs Falls campground access road.
- Provide picnic tables at each camp site.
- Continue to utilize volunteer campground hosts. Train hosts to provide interpretive information about the ACEC.

- Inventory existing trails and develop a system of trails that visitors may use in the ACEC to allow use and enjoyment of the area while protecting rare and sensitive plant species.
- Manage the old highway roadbed beyond the upper campground for nonmotorized use year round. Snowmobiles are not allowed on the BLM portions of this revegetated roadbed.
- Initiate a protective withdrawal for the Five Springs Falls ACEC to close the area to future locatable mineral exploration.
- Continue integrated weed management efforts in coordination with recreation maintenance and sensitive plant management.

#### Projects for Future Consideration

- Portions of the lower Five Springs Falls Campground are fenced. Developed sites are located along the road between the lower and upper campground and at the upper campground. These areas are not fenced at present. Should it be deemed necessary in the future, fencing will be added after appropriate resource clearances are conducted.

### **West Slope SRMA**

The Cody Resource Management Plan (RMP) established the West Slope Special Recreation Management Area covering about 101,000 acres of public land along the west slope of the Bighorn Mountains. The West Slope SRMA is used by the public for hunting, fishing, caving, sightseeing, camping, hiking, ATV riding, mountain biking, and horseback riding. Refer to the EA for a more detailed assessment of the Recreation Opportunity Spectrum and potential Recreation Management Zones within the SRMA.

### **RMP Objectives and Management Actions**

The recreation management objective is to enhance opportunities for primitive recreation, while increasing visitor services in some areas (to meet needs for more developed forms of recreation).

### **Recreation Management**

Additional directional and interpretive signs would be installed to facilitate recreational use of the west slope of the Bighorn Mountains.

### **Action Items**

#### Management

- Identify potential camping locations that are desirable to the public and commercial outfitters, such as areas near springs, cabins, and scenic viewpoints. Evaluate each site to determine projects such as fencing, signing, or delineating parking and camping areas that may be necessary to protect cultural and historic

resources, riparian areas, soils, vegetation, and visual resources. Identify locations, if any, where camping is prohibited.

- Site specific cultural resource and wildlife evaluations are required prior to installation of any identified projects.
- Some of the sites will be identified and approved as potential outfitter base camp locations to accommodate the current and anticipated future requests.
- Evaluation will include, but not be limited to the following locations:
  - Murdai Base Camp (see description of current management below)
  - Cow Creek
  - Upper and Lower Pete's Canyon
  - John Blue parking area
  - Georges Spring
  - Devil's Canyon along Porcupine Creek

Murdai Base Camp: Currently, there is an outfitter base camp authorized at Murdai through a Special Recreation Permit. The outfitter's employees and customers camp at the location when conducting cattle drives. The spring area was fenced and grazing by domestic animals is not allowed within the buck and pole fenced area to protect important resources. A larger area outside of the fenced spring location was divided and fencing installed to form two pastures. Light grazing by horses used during the two, one-week-long commercial cattle drive trips is allowed within the two pastures with restrictions. The horses would be allowed to lightly graze the "pastures" (rotating annually between the two) and a minimum 6" residual stubble height on herbaceous vegetation and 30% or less utilization on woody vegetation will be maintained. If the residual stubble height is less than 6" on herbaceous vegetation or there is more than 30% utilization on woody vegetation, horses must be removed from the pasture or not allowed in to begin with. The stubble height will also apply to other users of the public lands who might place their horses in the fenced pastures. The stubble height requirement may be adjusted by the range program if another height is found to be needed. If damage to resources appears to be imminent, additional steps will be taken to further restrict the use and protect the resources.

- Pursue evaluation/development of the following potential recreation facilities:
  - Trailhead at the base of the John Blue Canyon
  - Nonmotorized connector trail between Cottonwood and Pete's trails
  - Nonmotorized connector trail from the road north of Cottonwood Creek Trailhead T.57N., R.93W. Sec. 33SE1/4 to T.57N., R.93W. Sec. 34SW1/4.
  - Nonmotorized trail to a viewpoint of Melody Falls along the Cottonwood Trail
  - Seek approval to maintain existing hiking trails that access Devil's Canyon after resource and safety assessments have been done. Two potential trails are located at T. 57 N., R. 93 W. Sec. 9NE1/4 and T. 58 N., R. 93 W. Sec. 29NW1/4. Parking areas would need to be determined.

- Legal public access route from T.58N., R.93W. Sec. 30SE1/4 along an old jeep trail through the NE1/4 of Sec. 31 and the west ½ of Sec. 32 and from T.57N., R.93W. Sec. 8NE1/4 to the Devil's Canyon gate in Sec. 9NW1/4.
- Install visitor register boxes at all developed recreation sites.
- Continue integrated weed control efforts in conjunction with recreational trail and road maintenance.

#### Marketing

- Work with the Wyoming State Trails Program to develop a map of the ATV loop riding opportunities with descriptions of the varying challenge levels and loop mileage. The map would be posted at the entry point kiosks.
- Consider nominating Cottonwood Trail for designation as a National Recreation Trail and pursue development of a trail connection to the Bucking Mule Falls National Recreation Trail on the Bighorn National Forest

#### Monitoring

- Compile and assess the visitor use information and comments from visitor registers at each developed recreation site. Adjust management actions as appropriate to address visitor concerns and suggestions.
- Conduct visitor surveys at developed recreation sites and in other areas of high recreation use.
- Encourage all BLM staff to make contact with visitors in the field to informally assess the recreational activities, experiences and benefits they are seeking and to determine their level of satisfaction with the recreational opportunities being produced within the West Slope SRMA.
- Make use of traffic and trail counters where feasible to obtain visitor use data.
- Continue weed control and inventory efforts. Monitor spread and control successes.

#### Administration

- Process and issue a right-of-way to the BLM for the Cottonwood Canyon access road, trailhead and trail to clearly identify the boundaries of the developed recreation site and to secure public access.
- Process and issue rights-of-way for other hiking trails in the Little Mountain planning area to secure public access.

### Projects for future consideration

- During the upcoming revision of the Cody RMP, consider expanding the SRMA boundary west to the Little Mountain planning area boundary and/or consider designation of the Little Mountain SRMA separate from the West Slope SRMA.
- If private lands are acquired by the BLM, they will automatically become a part of the West Slope SRMA and will be subject to the recommended OHV route designations and management under this Little Mountain Activity Plan and the Cody RMP.
- Pursue a mineral withdrawal for Cottonwood Canyon Trailhead, based on a risk assessment for all developed recreation sites within the Cody Field Office area.

### **Worland Caves SRMA**

The BLM manages caves in the Worland Caves Special Recreation Management Area (SRMA), including Natural Trap and Horsethief Caves on Little Mountain. The caves are found in the Madison Limestone formation and the potential for additional cave resources to exist in the general area is high. Any newly discovered significant caves would be added to the Worland Caves SRMA. Caves are fragile, nonrenewable resources that contain cultural, paleontological, hydrologic, geologic, and biologic values. Caves are also a significant resource for recreational, scientific and educational purposes.

### **RMP Objectives and Management Actions**

See the Little Mountain ACEC section for a description of RMP objectives and management actions related to cave management. Additional action items and projects for future consideration are also documented in the Little Mountain ACEC section of this plan.

### **Worland District Cave Management Plan**

The Worland District Cave Management Plan was signed in 1992. The overall objective of the Worland District cave management program is to manage caves to avoid unacceptable degradation of cave resources from visitor use and above ground activities, while allowing for continued use of the resource without placing undue restrictions on resource users or surface activities. To meet this end, the following specific management goals have been established.

- To promote visitor health and safety by providing information to users about environmental hazards present in some cave systems.
- To protect important cave resources including such resources as rare and/or fragile cave formations, cultural resources, paleontological resources, hydrologic resources, and biologic resources.
- To maintain a “wild” cave experience for recreational users.
- To determine the “extent of” and resource values of known and newly discovered caves to enable more thorough cave management both within caves and on adjacent surface areas.
- To provide legal access and visitor services for cave users. This includes securing needed access; and providing necessary signing, public awareness



information, and media information to individuals interested in cave resources.

## **Action Items**

### **Management**

- The signs at the entrance of each gated cave will be reviewed and updated to ensure the accuracy of information about the cave permit requirements and to inform visitors about environmental hazards and safety risks associated with the cave.
- Work with volunteer caving groups to develop individual cave management plans for Natural Trap, Horsethief Cave, Titan Cave, and other caves as necessary. The plans will address recreational, scientific, and educational use of the cave resources and assess the need for visitor facilities for cavers, visitor services and cave patrols, use levels, and interpretation related to the cave resources.

### **Marketing**

- Provide information explaining the Federal Cave Resources Protection Act of 1988 to the Cody and Worland BLM Front Desk staff to assist in answering questions about the management of cave resources.
- Continue to provide education to the public on the value and importance of cave resources through informal interactions with local and regional cavers, and through presentations to local school groups, community groups, and at the Buffalo Bill Dam Visitor Center.

### **Monitoring**

- Continue to work with volunteer caving groups to maintain the cave gates, locks, and visitor registers, and to conduct cave monitoring, surveying, mapping, and rehabilitation projects as necessary.
- Document any new cave discoveries on the significant caves list as required by the Federal Cave Resource Protection Act of 1988.

### **Administration**

- Review and update the cave permit forms to ensure that they provide adequate information about the cave environment and potential hazards that may be encountered.
- Establish a clearly documented tracking system for the rotation of the cave gate locks.
- Ensure that the Cave Search and Rescue Plan and any associated cooperative agreements are adequate and up-to-date. Develop a schedule to maintain these agreements and update the contact lists.

- Maintain an updated list of cave program volunteers and potential volunteer cave guides.

## **Wild and Scenic Rivers**

### **RMP Objectives and Management Actions**

At the time of completion of the Cody RMP, the review of rivers pursuant to provisions of the Wild and Scenic Rivers Act had not been completed. The RMP specified that: The required reviews will be conducted as part of a separate study using the planning process and the Cody RMP will be amended as necessary to accommodate the results. Until those reviews are completed, no uses will be permitted which could impair the presence of any outstandingly remarkable values along river corridors or otherwise effect the eligibility of any river for possible inclusion in the National Wild and Scenic River System.

### **Interim Management Prescriptions**

The Final Report – Cody Field Office Review of Potential Wild and Scenic Rivers in the Cody Resource Management Plan Planning Area was prepared in 2003 by BLM and Jonas Consulting. Attachment D of the Final Report is entitled “Management of BLM-administered Public Lands within the Cody Resource Management Plan Planning Area that meet the Wild and Scenic Rivers Suitability Factors.” (See plan appendix 1).

Attachment D of the Final Report contains interim management prescriptions meant to provide temporary or interim protection of the Wild and Scenic Rivers (WSR) values on suitable waterway areas prior to the completion of the Cody Resource Management Plan (RMP) Revision. Included are management objectives and actions that will maintain the outstandingly remarkable values and tentative classifications identified for Porcupine Creek and the Deer Creek, Oasis Spring Creek, and Trout Creek tributaries to Porcupine Creek. Since these creeks are located in deep canyons, the boundary that was identified in Attachment D for these creeks was identified as rim-to-rim in each canyon except where rim-to-rim would exceed an average of half a mile. For ease of mapping purposes, the boundary shown on the Little Mountain Planning Area map is ¼ mile on either side of each creek.

### **Action Items**

- Identify and monitor any potential threats to suitability and/or resources, such as: livestock grazing, weed invasions, mining, impacts from recreation use.
- The results of the Wild and Scenic River Review Final report will be incorporated into the Management Situation Analysis and presented to the public for review and comment during the upcoming Cody RMP revision scoping process.

### **Other Resources**

The Cody RMP guides management of all resources within the Little Mountain planning area. Some subsequent activity level planning has been completed associated with

wildlife and range programs as described below. The following RMP decisions are applicable to the entire Little Mountain activity planning area.

### **Wildlife and Fish Habitat RMP Objectives and Management Actions**

The wildlife and fish habitat management objective is to maintain and enhance fish and wildlife resources so that the forage production and quality of rangelands and fish and wildlife habitat will be maintained or improved.

#### **West Slope Habitat Management Plan**

The West Slope Habitat Management Plan (HMP) was signed in 1984 and was prepared by the BLM Worland District in cooperation with the Wyoming Game and Fish Department. The goals of the plan are to maintain and improve habitat conditions for all wildlife through good ecosystem management and to conduct needed inventories and resource assessments.

The following objectives and planned actions were included in the plan:

- To manage habitat to meet the forage, water, and cover requirements of priority wildlife species. Planned actions include water development, forage use adjustments, vegetation manipulation (prescribed burns), and land tenure adjustments to complement crucial habitat management.
- To manage man-caused disruptions and restrictions of big game migrations, movements, and utilization of habitat. Planned actions include fence modifications and road and other human use management.
- To manage 85 miles of BLM game fish habitat in Class I stream bank condition. Planned actions include stream bank stabilization, riparian zone fencing, forage use adjustments, seeding and planting, instream structures, land tenure adjustments, and beaver management.
- To establish and maintain viable habitat for duck and geese on 75 BLM reservoirs and maintain fishery reservoir shorelines in Class I condition. Planned actions include island construction, pothole development, seeding and planting, nesting and resting structures, fencing, dike and spillway modifications, fish shelters, trash catchers, and flocculation techniques.
- To improve and maintain all other BLM wetlands (springs, seeps) to Class III (fair) and higher condition. Planned actions include fencing, seeding and planting, and buffer zones.

The HMP includes a discussion of potential projects which have not been evaluated. In the Simmons Canyon area, the following potential projects were listed: water development, shrub rehabilitation (mountain mahogany), prescribed burning of sagebrush, spring developments. In the Mexican Hill area, a potential project to modify fences by adding elk passage gates was noted.

The following information relating to recreation management and wildlife concerns was included in the HMP. Recreation and wildlife are highly interdependent in the HMP area. Sound wildlife management is needed to insure a continuing supply of wildlife-based recreation opportunities. Proper management of recreation use can benefit wildlife

by helping to accomplish harvest objectives and by preventing wildlife disturbance by recreationists during certain times of the year. Close coordination of wildlife and recreation management plans and actions will be required on a continuing basis in the interest of both programs. The following wildlife concerns will be considered in the development of recreation plans.

1. Area closures
2. Road closures
3. Access acquisition
4. Seasonal use restrictions
5. Careful placement of user facilities

#### **Action Items**

- Implement the seasonal closure to motorized vehicles (December 1 – April 30) for the top of Little Mountain. See “Projects to be implemented upon approval of this plan” in the Travel Management Activity Plan below.

### **Livestock Grazing Management RMP Objectives and Management Actions**

The livestock grazing management objective is to improve forage production and ecological range condition for the benefit of livestock use, wildlife, and watershed resources.

#### **Allotment Management Plans (AMPs) and Standards and Guideline Evaluations (S&Gs)**

There are twelve livestock grazing allotments within the Little Mountain planning area. Eleven of the allotments lie entirely within the planning area while one large allotment lies mainly outside the area but does have a trailing pasture along Highway Alt. 14 within the planning area. Nine of the allotments have Allotment Management Plans in place (written in 1994 and 1997). These plans describe how grazing will be conducted and include actions related to facility construction and maintenance, monitoring, prescribed burns, forage use levels, seasonal rotation schedules, salt placement, herding, fencing, protection of riparian areas, trailing, development of additional water sources such as protection of springs and seeps and water pipeline and trough placement. The amount of allowable grazing is also included in the plans.

Wyoming Rangeland Standards Conformance Reviews (commonly called Standards and Guidelines or S&Gs) have been conducted on eleven of the allotments during the years 2000 to 2004.

There are six standards which are evaluated. They include:

Standard #1: Within the potential of the ecological site, soils are stable and allow for water infiltration to provide for optimal plant growth and minimal surface runoff.

Standard #2: Riparian and wetland vegetation has structural, age, and species diversity characteristic of the stage of channel succession and is resilient and capable of recovering

from natural and human disturbance in order to provide forage and cover, capture sediment, dissipate energy, and provide for groundwater recharge.

Standard #3: Upland vegetation on each ecological site consists of plant communities appropriate to the site, which are resilient, diverse, and able to recover from natural and human disturbance.

Standard #4: Rangelands are capable of sustaining viable populations and a diversity of native plant and animal species appropriate to the habitat. Habitats that support or could support threatened species, endangered species, species of special concern, or sensitive species will be maintained or enhanced.

Standard #5: Water quality meets State standards.

Standard #6: Air quality meets State standards.

Livestock grazing allotments are evaluated by an interdisciplinary team to ascertain the relative health of the rangeland. Standards are the benchmarks that are used to compare present resource conditions in the allotment to help determine rangeland health. The S&G document contains a section where factors related to non-conformance with standards can be described. Factors such as mining, recreation, other surface uses, as well as grazing by livestock and wildlife may affect the area's ability to meet standards. The following table summarizes the S&G status by allotment and year:

**Table 1**

<b>AMP and S&amp;G Completion Table</b>									
<b>Allotment Name</b>	<b>Allotment Number</b>	<b>Year AMP Completed</b>	<b>Year S &amp; G Completed</b>	<b>Standard</b>					
				1	2	3	4	5	6
Mexican Hills	01010	1997	2000	Y	N	N	Y	U	Y
Many Springs	01024	1997	2001	N	N	N	N	U	Y
Burnham	01026	1994	2001	Y	N	Y	Y	U	Y
Moss Ranch	01027	1994	2002	Y	Y	Y	Y	U	Y
Little Mountain	01028	1997	2001	N	N	N	N	U	Y
Moncur Springs	01029	1997	2001	N	N	N	N	U	Y
Lovell Group 1	01032	no	2004	N	N	N	N	U	Y
One Forty	01033	1997	2001	N	N	N	N	U	Y
Willow Creek	01034	no	2004	Y	Y	Y	Y	U	Y
Natural Trap	01089	1994	2001	Y	N	Y	Y	U	Y
Low Miller	01090	1997	2000	Y	N	N	Y	U	Y
Kane Stock Trail	01405	no	no	U	U	U	U	U	U
<sup>1</sup> Codes in Standard columns are as follows: Y=Yes meets standard, N=No does not meet standard, U=Unknown									
<sup>2</sup> Standards 5 and 6 are dependent upon determinations made by the Wyoming Department of Environmental Quality (DEQ). Standard 5 is Unknown if allotment specific data is not available. DEQ has not identified air quality impairments within the Cody Field Office resulting in Standard 6 being met.									

The S&G document contains a section which lists selected guidelines to implement changes in grazing management and a section which identifies specific actions including permit/lease terms and conditions. The last section of the S&G document is the Authorized Officer's Determination. In this section, the Authorized Officer for BLM determines what corrective actions will be taken to help the area meet standards. This may include corrective actions for other activities in addition to grazing management.

Corrective actions include the following types of actions: establishing deferred rotational strategies which allow some rest during the active growing season, establishing forage use levels, fencing, monitoring, development or maintenance of water sources for better livestock distribution, prescribed burning of juniper and/or sagebrush to increase plant diversity and vigor, protection of riparian areas including fencing of springs and seeps, and treatment of weeds, and reductions in Active Preference. Many of these actions have been taken and improvements in resource condition in several of the allotments are evident.

#### **Action Items**

- Sign the stock tanks in the planning area "non-potable water" to enhance visitor safety.
- Use portable cattleguards where appropriate to determine their effectiveness.

### **Cultural and Paleontological Resources RMP Objectives and Management Actions**

The cultural and paleontological management objective is to protect, study, and expand the interpretation of these resources.

#### **Action Items**

- Continue to pursue funding for assessment of the historic cabins on Little Mountain through the BLM Budget Planning System. Upon completion of this project, cabins can be preserved as significant Historic Properties, interpreted, rehabilitated, removed, or released for other uses.
- Pursue volunteer participation in an adopt-a-cabin restoration program.
- Pursue partnership opportunities with universities and the Bighorn Canyon National Recreation Area, National Park Service to complete the historic cabin assessment and assessment of known historic trails and other needed cultural and historic assessments.
- Use information from the assessments to determine opportunities for interpretation and additional methods to protect cultural resources.
- Use law enforcement/regulatory signing to protect cultural and paleontological resources as appropriate.

## Travel Management Activity Plan

An inventory of the roads and trails in the planning area was completed using GPS/GIS technology, aerial photos, topographic maps, and historic information. Maps 1 and 2, Little Mountain Planning Area – Alternative 1 and 2 represent all routes known to exist as of July 2006. For the purposes of this plan, roads, primitive roads, and trails will be referred to as routes.

### **RMP Objectives and Management Actions**

The off-road vehicle (ORV) management objective is to maintain or enhance opportunities for ORV use while protecting or avoiding adverse effects of vehicular travel on other resource values.

The inventory map represents the following route types:

- Gravel Road: Road that is regularly maintained and has a gravel surface.
- Graded Dirt Road: Road that was constructed by mechanical means, may or may not be regularly maintained.
- Two-Track: Route that was created and maintained by the passage of vehicles, vegetation is present between two tracks.
- ATV Trail: Route that is not suitable for full size vehicles, generally steep and narrow routes. All of the ATV routes identified in the planning area were previously Graded Dirt Roads or Two-tracks.
- Non-Motorized Trail: A single track route suitable for non-motorized uses including hiking, horseback riding, and mountain bike riding.
- Reclaimed: Route that is naturally revegetating and no longer in use.

In April 2006, the *BLM Roads and Trails Terminology Report* was issued to standardize the terms used for transportation assets within the BLM. Following are the route definitions from that report with the corresponding route inventory types used in this planning process shown in parentheses after the definition:

- Road: A linear route declared a road by the owner, managed for use by low-clearance vehicles having four or more wheels, and maintained for regular and continuous use. (Gravel Road)
- Primitive Road: A linear route managed for use by four-wheel drive or high clearance vehicles. These routes do not normally meet any BLM road design standards. (Graded Dirt Road, Two-Track)
- Trail: A linear route managed for human-powered, stock, or off-highway vehicle forms of transportation or for historical or heritage values. Trails are not generally managed for use by four-wheel drive or high-clearance vehicles. (ATV Trail, Non-Motorized Trail)
- Transportation Linear Disturbances: Man-made linear features that are not part of the BLM's Transportation System. Linear disturbances may include engineered (planned) as well as unplanned single- and two-track linear features. (Reclaimed)

Additional recommendations from the *Roads and Trails Terminology Report* will be incorporated into this activity plan as appropriate; see references to the report in the Maps, and Maintenance Action Items.

Upon completion of this plan, a decision record will approve the official Little Mountain Travel Management Map showing the designated network of routes. Any modifications or additions would be addressed through the appropriate level of NEPA analysis as specified in the implementation section of this plan.

### **Travel Management Goals and Objectives**

- Provide access for a wide variety of recreational activities on public lands.
- Provide administrative, commercial, and private land access where necessary.
- Discourage and reduce trespass on adjacent private lands.
- Protect and restore resource values and prevent the creation of new, unauthorized routes.
- Provide clear information to facilitate compliance with route designations.
- Identify future planning needs and opportunities related to travel management.

### **Route Selection Criteria**

#### 43 CFR 8342 - Route Designation Criteria

“All designations shall be based on the protection of the resources of the public lands, the promotion of the safety of all users of the public lands, and the minimization of conflicts among various uses of the public lands.”

#### Cody Field Office – Criteria for Consideration of Route Designations

Routes that provide access to existing rights with access needs such as rights-of-way (R/W), easements, private land, state land, National Park Service or Forest Service land, etc.

Routes that provide known access needs for maintenance of range improvements, law enforcement, commercial operations, or other administrative activities.

Routes identified on the BLM transportation system.

Routes that provide access to large blocks of BLM-administered public land or serve as important connecting routes.

Routes that provide access for recreational activities or unique motorized recreational opportunities for both public and commercial activities (opportunities may include wildlife and scenery viewing, scenic lookout points, hunting, OHV driving, caving, etc).



Routes necessary to maintain the prescribed setting characteristics and the targeted activity, experience, and benefit outcomes for each recreation management zone (RMZ).

#### Cody Field Office – Criteria for Consideration of Route Closures

Routes causing unacceptable resource damage, erosion, or route proliferation that are not manageable (i.e.: wash outs, deep ruts, detours, steep slopes).

Routes through soils that are easily damaged, riparian areas, or areas highly susceptible to resource damage.

Multiple routes to the same location.

Routes that are naturally re-vegetating, are no longer used, or are no longer physically present.

Routes that have a high potential to negatively affect T&E or sensitive wildlife species or limited and important wildlife habitat (i.e.: crucial winter range). Routes that have a high potential to encourage harassment or disruption to wildlife.

Routes that pose a safety hazard to the public.

Routes causing conflict between motorized and non-motorized recreation opportunities.

Routes which may adversely affect areas of cultural or religious concern for Native Americans.

Routes which may adversely affect sites which may be eligible for the National Register of Historic Places.

Routes that are above known caves and cave passages (see withdrawal boundaries for Horsethief Cave and Natural Trap Cave) and routes into old mine areas (see closure boundaries for Lisbon (aka Dirty Beast) and Titan Mines).

Route closures that are necessary to maintain the prescribed setting characteristics and the targeted activity, experience, and benefit outcomes for each recreation management zone (RMZ).

Unauthorized, user created routes that were not in existence when the Cody RMP was signed in 1990.

## **Action Items**

### **Maps**

Objective: Produce an official travel management map to document route designations.

- ❑ An official Little Mountain Travel Management Map will identify the designated routes. The official map will be based on Map 1, Little Mountain Planning Area – Alternative 1. The map will be created using Arcmap and GIS technology. Routes will be designated as follows:

Open to motorized vehicles - routes will be designated as open for motorized vehicle use.

ATV and non-motorized use only – routes will be limited to ATVs such as four wheelers and motorcycles. These routes will be closed to full size motorized vehicles. The routes will begin at adequate turn-around/unloading points that will need to be determined on-the-ground during implementation.

Closed to motorized vehicles – routes will be closed to all motorized vehicle use. Where appropriate, these routes will be obliterated through reclamation efforts, others will be left to natural re-vegetation. Routes not specifically designated for use on the official travel management map will be closed to vehicle travel.

Non-motorized travel - hiking, mountain biking, and horseback riding will be allowed on all designated routes including “Open”, “ATV and Non-Motorized Use Only”, and on existing routes that are “Closed” to motorized vehicles, but have not been physically reclaimed. All forms of travel will be restricted from “Closed” routes or the portions of “Closed” routes that are physically obliterated by reclamation efforts such as re-contouring and re-seeding until reclamation is complete and all signs are removed. Non-motorized travel will be allowed cross-country if the use does not result in the creation of new routes or otherwise cause resource damage.

Note: due to safety concerns related to concentrated equestrian use and limited sight distance and steep grades, mountain bike use will not be allowed on Cottonwood Creek Trail. Mountain bike use is allowed on all other roads and trails within the Little Mountain planning area. Mountain biking is not allowed on public lands along the creek segments that were found to meet the suitability factors for a tentative wild classification under the Wild and Scenic Rivers review process. Those creeks are: portions of Porcupine Creek (6.4 miles), Oasis Spring Creek (2.4 miles),

and Trout Creek (0.9 mile). Mountain biking is allowed on public lands along those portions of creeks that were found to meet the suitability factors for a tentative scenic classification. Those creeks are: Porcupine Creek upstream from the confluence with Deer Creek (3.3 miles) and Deer Creek (1.3 miles). Those creeks have a route along them.

Non-motorized use will be managed in accordance with 43 CFR 8364 – Closures and Restrictions and 43 CFR 8365 – Rules of Conduct.

Over-the-Snow Vehicles – Use of motorized vehicles for travel over-the-snow would be subject to the same requirements and limitations as all other motorized vehicles, and subject to the route designations, as specified in this plan.

- ❑ Coordinate with the Cody/Worland Field Office zone engineers to update the Facility Asset Management System (FAMS), the asset management database system for the storage of all designated transportation related linear features, as required by the BLM Roads and Trails Terminology Report.
- ❑ The official Little Mountain Travel Management Map will be provided to the BLM Wyoming State Office for inclusion in future revisions or reprints of the 1:100,000 land status maps.
- ❑ The official map will be displayed at the BLM Cody Field Office and copies will be provided to local agencies and organizations that provide information to the public, such as the Forest Service, National Park Service, Game and Fish, Chamber of Commerce, and others as necessary.
- ❑ A handout with the official map will be produced for distribution to the public and will be posted on the BLM Cody Field Office website. Refer to the Education and Information section below.
- ❑ The official map will be updated as necessary to reflect any modifications or additions, as described in the Implementation section below.
- ❑ Information about the route designations, signs and markers will be incorporated into the Wyoming State ORV Program Maps as they are produced.

### Signs and Markers

Objective: Identify the designated routes on-the-ground in a clear and consistent manner to facilitate compliance and enforcement of the route designations.

Note: Sign design, color, and placement will be considered to reduce potential impacts to visual resources. As compliance with route designations

increases, and some signs are found to be unnecessary, the signs will be removed.

- ❑ Information signs will be placed at each main entry point onto BLM-managed public lands in the Little Mountain planning area. The information signs will include a map of the area showing the designated routes and an explanation of the route marker system. Information will be incorporated to explain the importance of OHV designations and their link to protecting and restoring resource values such as: reducing soil erosion, reducing weed spread, improving water quality and improving wildlife habitat. Each sign will also provide tips for low impact OHV use and outdoor ethics, such as the principles of Leave No Trace and Tread Lightly!
- ❑ Route designations will be marked with brown flexible markers with standard decals as follows:
  - Designated “Open” routes will be marked with “Designated Route” or white arrow decals at intersections and periodically along the route as necessary to indicate routes that are open for motorized vehicle travel.
  - “ATV and Non-Motorized Use Only” routes will be marked with standard ATV symbol decals, indicating that the route is closed to full size vehicles.
  - Closed routes will be marked with “No Motor Vehicle” or “Route Closed” decals with standard vehicle symbols. As closed routes heal through natural re-vegetation or reclamation efforts, and markers are no longer necessary, they will be removed. Closed route markers will remain where necessary for resource protection or public safety.
- ❑ Where there is a potential for an open route to be extended past its current end point by vehicle travel, “Motorized Route Ends” decals may be used.
- ❑ Replace the sign to identify the easement through private land granted to BLM by E.O. Bischoff Ranch.
- ❑ Develop a sign for the Devil’s Canyon gate with an explanation of the public access rules. See the “implementation” section for a detailed description of public access through this gate.
- ❑ Signs will be placed to clearly mark the boundary of the withdrawal areas and the mine closure areas.
- ❑ Signs will be placed to clearly mark the boundary of the seasonal closure area and to inform the public of the seasonal closure dates and allowed uses.

## Education and Information

Objective: Provide clear and consistent information related to the route designations and the implementation process that will help ensure public understanding and compliance with the designations.

- ❑ A one page, double-sided handout showing the route designations and other travel management information will be developed and disseminated to the public. The handout will include information related to low impact OHV use, protection and restoration of resource values, prevention of spreading noxious weeds, and outdoor ethics, such as the principles of Leave No Trace and Tread Lightly!
- ❑ News releases will be prepared for key phases of the travel management planning and implementation process, to be distributed for publication in local newspapers and posted on the BLM website.

## Barriers

Objective: Use physical barriers, if necessary, to discourage use and allow rehabilitation of closed routes.

- ❑ Natural barriers would include soil berms, rocks or boulders, or vegetation placed to prevent travel on closed routes.
- ❑ Fences and gates may be used where natural barriers are not feasible or effective, or where occasional administrative travel may be required.
- ❑ Gates may be locked if determined to be necessary by the Authorized Officer.
- ❑ Gates would be installed as shown on Map 1: Little Mountain Planning Area – Alternative 1, to facilitate enforcement of the seasonal closure. The actual gate locations will need to be determined on-the-ground during implementation to ensure adequate vehicle turn around points.
- ❑ Temporary or emergency closures may also be needed for safety or to facilitate maintenance and repairs or to respond to other occurrences that impact roads, facilities, or resources.

## Rehabilitation

Objective: Apply rehabilitation techniques to closed routes, where necessary to speed the healing process, discourage use of closed routes, and minimize the impact on visual resources.

- ❑ Rehabilitation actions will be determined according to the following options:

1. Leave route to natural re-vegetation, route is not currently visible, no need to sign.
  2. Sign route and leave to natural re-vegetation.
  3. Sign route and reclaim the portion of the route that is visible from all intersections with open routes.
  4. Sign route and reclaim the entire route.
- Seeding will be done where necessary to aid rehabilitation of closed routes. Appropriate seed mixtures will be selected for each site based on individual site conditions. Seed mixtures would be selected from native species that would include but not be limited to:

#### Grasses

bluebunch wheatgrass (*Pseudoroegneria spicata*)  
 green needlegrass (*Stipa viridula*)  
 needle-and-thread grass (*Stipa comata*)  
 bottlebrush squirrel tail (*Elymus elymoides*)  
 western wheatgrass (*Pascopyrum smithii*)  
 Indian ricegrass (*Achnatherum hymenoides*)  
 Idaho fescue (*Festuca idahoensis*)  
 king spike fescue (*Leucopoa kingii*)  
 basin wild rye (*Leymus cinereus*)  
 thick spike wheatgrass (*Elymus lanceolatus*)

#### Forbs

milkvetch (*Astragalus spp*)  
 scarlet globe mallow (*Sphaeralcea coccinea*)  
 western yarrow (*Achillea millefolium L. var occidentalis DC*)  
 sainfoin (*Onobrychis viciifolia*)  
 Rocky Mountain penstemon (*Penstemon strictus*)  
 Evening Primrose (*Oenothera cespitosa*)  
 Indian Paintbrush (*Castilleja Mutis ex L. f.*)  
 Rocky Mountian beeplant (*Cleome serrulata*)  
 Dotted Gay Feather (*Liatris punctata*)

#### Shrubs

winterfat (*Karscheninnikovia Guldenstaedt*)  
 fourwing saltbush (*Atriplex canescens*)

- Recommended reclamation techniques include scarifying or ripping the road surface to break up compacted soil and allow maximum moisture retention. Distribute seed uniformly over the area, then cover the seed by raking or dragging the ground or by other methods that provide adequate cover. After the first year, seeded areas would be fertilized if seedling establishment is sparse. Broadcast seeding is the preferred method and would generally be done in the fall. Techniques such as hydraulic seeding, seed drilling, mulching, water barring,

pitting, roughening, contour furrowing, or similar methods may be used as appropriate on a case-by-case basis.

- Weed treatment and control measures would be implemented as needed to promote revegetation with native plants and prevent any new weed establishment and/or control of existing weed sources.

### Monitoring

Objective: Identify specific actions, including timeframes, methods, and anticipated resource needs for environmental monitoring.

- Monitoring of OHV designations is required by 43 CFR 8342.3 Designation changes:

*Monitoring use.* The Authorized Officer shall monitor effects of the use of off-road vehicles. On the basis of information so obtained, and whenever the Authorized Officer deems it necessary to carry out the objectives of this part, designations may be amended, revised, revoked, or other actions taken pursuant to the regulations in this part.

Items to monitor and associated indicators:

1. Resource damage resulting from OHV use.
  - Braided trails
  - Ruts
  - Hill climbs
  - Road width
  - User created roads or trails, new disturbance
  - Effects of OHV use on wildlife, cultural resources
  - Incidence of noxious weeds
2. Compliance with route designations
  - Vandalism of signs and barriers
  - Trends in the number of OHV violations and incident reports
  - Success of rehabilitation efforts
  - Amount of natural re-vegetation of closed routes
3. OHV user conflicts and complaints
  - OHV associated private land conflicts
  - OHV associated conflicts with other recreation activities

Monitoring of OHV impacts is the responsibility of all resource specialists, a cooperative effort is necessary to ensure that the travel management efforts are consistent with, and are helping to achieve the goals and objectives of other resources in the planning area. Annual monitoring of the above indicators will be conducted by field office staff and volunteers. The OHV Observation Report Booklet will be used initially; a more detailed monitoring checklist will be developed if necessary.

If monitoring indicates resource damage is occurring:

1. On designated routes: consider the need for road maintenance efforts, road re-routes, or installation of waterbars, culverts, etc and the feasibility to complete the maintenance in a timely manner; off of designated routes: consider the need for additional signing and barriers.
2. Increase educational efforts regarding resource damage and its consequences, ie: not driving on wet or muddy roads, staying on designated roads.
3. Consider the need for a seasonal closure, type of vehicle restrictions, or complete closure of the route

Resource Damage is defined in IM NO. WY-2005-034 – Travel Management Guidelines for the Public Lands in Wyoming:

Resource Damage: Defined as leaving signs of vehicle use such as wheel ruts in wet meadows, visual scars on hillsides or soil erosion. Additional examples include surface disturbance that causes the loss of vegetative cover, degradation of wildlife habitat, the creation of new roads, and the introduction of noxious weeds. Damage to vegetation also includes crushing or uprooting trees and shrubs. The determination of whether resource damage has occurred is left to the discretion of Field Managers and law enforcement personnel. Any incident of resource damage resulting in a citation would be documented by the Law Enforcement personnel and included in the activity plan monitoring reports.

If monitoring indicates a lack of compliance with OHV designations:

1. Increase public education and signing efforts:
  - a. Publish a news release in local newspapers as a reminder of the OHV designations and rules.
  - b. Add more prominent route markers and signs.
2. Install additional and more prominent barriers on closed routes.
3. If non-compliance continues, increase law enforcement patrol efforts in the problem areas.

If monitoring indicates that user conflicts are occurring on multiple use trails:

1. Increase public education and signing efforts.
2. If non-compliance continues, increase law enforcement patrol efforts in the problem areas.
3. Consider designating roads and trails for single uses to prevent user conflicts.

The annual monitoring results and documentation of any management actions that were taken in response to monitoring efforts will be compiled by the field office Recreation staff. This information will be used to determine priority areas for future monitoring efforts, law enforcement emphasis, and funding requests. The monitoring results will also be used to evaluate the effectiveness of this activity plan and to identify needed plan amendments or modifications.



The following data gathering techniques will be utilized:

- ❑ Traffic Counters have been placed in key access locations within the Little Mountain planning area. Additional counters will be installed as necessary. These counters will be maintained and the traffic counts will continue to be documented for a period of at least one year. This documentation will provide a picture of the overall vehicle travel in the planning area.
- ❑ Photo-monitoring points will be established in key locations to monitor implementation actions and their effectiveness. Example photo points are: known areas where cross-country travel has occurred, closed routes, rehabilitation projects, known erosion areas, and areas of good road quality for future reference. Photo monitoring points will be documented using GPS and a monitoring schedule will be established.
- ❑ The monitoring data collected would be used to assess the effectiveness of the plan and associated implementation actions. Closed routes would be monitored for signs of use, rehabilitated routes would be monitored to determine effectiveness of seeding and water drainage, and the plan area will be monitored for sign conditions. Modifications to the plan would be considered if monitoring indicates that the goals and objectives are not being met.

### Enforcement

Objective: Identify specific actions, including timeframes, methods, and anticipated resource needs for compliance and enforcement related to the route designations.

- ❑ Law enforcement efforts will be implemented in stages, beginning with warnings and progressing to citations upon full implementation. Emphasis will be placed on self-regulation by user groups.
- ❑ Upon full implementation, citations will be as follows:
  - First offense will usually result in a collateral forfeiture citation.
  - Second offense will usually result in a court appearance.
- ❑ The Little Mountain area would be identified as a priority/emphasis area for law enforcement patrol following initial implementation as time and staff allows. Educational efforts would be encouraged by staff conducting field work.
- ❑ Increased patrol would be implemented in areas where monitoring efforts detect non-compliance with route designations.

- ❑ The cooperative law enforcement agreements that are currently in place would be maintained with the adjacent land management agencies (National Park Service and National Forest Service) to enhance law enforcement patrol and emergency response in the area.
- ❑ Information and regulatory sign wording will be reviewed by the Cody Field Office Law Enforcement Ranger.

### Maintenance

Objective: Document maintenance standards and needs.

- ❑ The current route maintenance intensities for each designated route will be documented in the Facility Asset Management System (FAMS) as specified in the *Bureau of Land Management Road and Trails Terminology Report, April 2006*. Modifications will be identified and recommended if necessary.
- ❑ Maintenance of open roads, and trails will be done to minimize soil erosion and other resource degradation. This maintenance will be done on a case-by-case basis by requesting assistance from the BLM Worland Field Office zone operations staff.
- ❑ Maintenance procedures and schedules will be developed for signs and markers. This will include anticipated replacement needs. A sign inventory and photo database will be created to facilitate tracking of sign maintenance.
- ❑ Maintenance procedures for physical barriers will be developed.
- ❑ BLM coordination with Big Horn County Weed and Pest would continue for weed treatment and control efforts.

### Implementation

Objective: Implement the action items specified in this plan in a consistent and timely manner.

- ❑ Initial implementation will be in the summer of 2007, with additional signing and rehabilitation completed in subsequent years as funding and workload allow.
- ❑ Implementation of the “signs and markers”, “barriers”, and “rehabilitation” actions identified in this plan will be based on the following priorities:
  1. Routes leading into private land, National Park Service land, and Forest Service land. (phase 1)

2. Routes within the Little Mountain and Five Springs Falls ACECs (phase 2)
  3. All other routes (phase 3)
- ❑ Limited motorized cross-country travel, or exceptions to the route designations on BLM-managed public lands may be allowed for certain permitted uses and administrative uses as defined in 43 CFR 8340.0-5(a). Such use will be at the discretion of the Authorized Officer and determined on a case-by-case basis. Authorization for exceptions to the OHV designations for permitted uses will be documented in the respective permit files. Exceptions may also be granted by the Authorized Officer for certain pre-permit activities (ie: geophysical exploration). Verbal authorizations will be documented in writing.
    - 43 CFR 8340.0-5 Definitions.
      - (a): *Off-road vehicle* means any motorized vehicle capable of, or designed for, travel on or immediately over land, water, or other natural terrain, excluding:
        - (1) Any nonamphibious registered motorboat;
        - (2) Any military, fire, emergency, or law enforcement vehicle while being used for emergency purposes;
        - (3) Any vehicle whose use is expressly authorized by the Authorized Officer, or otherwise officially approved;
        - (4) Vehicles in official use; and
        - (5) Any combat or combat support vehicle when used in times of national defense emergencies.
  - ❑ Limited cross country travel by motorized vehicles, or exceptions to the route designations on BLM managed public lands may be allowed for the grazing permittees within the Little Mountain Planning Area. The purpose of these exceptions is to authorize maintenance of range improvements, moving cattle, and accessing their private land holdings within the planning area. Travel on wet and/or muddy roads should be avoided to prevent rutting and potential soil erosion.
  - ❑ Authorized exceptions to the OHV designations would be included as a statement in the appropriate NEPA documentation and in the permit stipulations, identifying the authorized route exceptions or locations of cross country travel.
  - ❑ Modifications or additions to the route designations would be done through an appropriate level of environmental analysis and NEPA documentation with a statement, “this document amends the travel management plan to include the following described route in the appropriate road use category” (see Categorical Exclusion: 516 DM 11.5 G. Transportation Signs and Documentation of NEPA Adequacy: WO IM 2001-062).

- ❑ Modifications or additions to the route designations may be necessary to address proposals for new routes associated with rights-of-way or other permitted activities on public lands; to address future public access needs, or changing resource concerns; or to address the appropriate management of existing routes that are not represented on the inventory map. Any proposed changes would be subject to review and determination based on the goals and objectives and route selection criteria in this plan.
- ❑ Determination of the appropriate route designation and future management responsibilities for any new routes that are authorized would be documented as a condition of issuance of the permit or right-of-way.
- ❑ The official Travel Management Map will be updated as needed to reflect any approved modifications or additions. The revised map will be posted in the BLM Cody Field Office and will be available for distribution to the public.
- ❑ Additional guidance for management of motorized vehicles on BLM-managed public lands is available in the Travel Management Guidelines for the Public Lands in Wyoming (IM No. WY-2005-034), March 10, 2005 and the BLM Roads and Trails Terminology Report (IM No. WO-2006-173), April 2006.

### Specific Projects

Objective: Throughout this planning process, potential travel and access related projects were identified. The objective of this section of the plan is to document the projects to be implemented with this plan and the ideas for future consideration through the appropriate planning processes.

### Projects to be implemented upon approval of this plan:

- ❑ Pursue funding for implementation of this plan through the BLM Budget Planning System.
- ❑ Pursue opportunities to involve volunteers and local clubs in implementation efforts; consider holding volunteer special events in the area to emphasize education and self-regulation of recreation groups.
- ❑ Devil's Canyon Gate:
  - Authorize the Devil's Canyon Gate in a cooperative agreement through the range program.
  - Modify the gate to allow both BLM and the private landowners to have separate locks and the ability to unlock the gate.
  - Modify the gate to allow foot, horseback, and mountain bike access to the public. Access by ATV and full size vehicles would be allowed for administrative purposes only.

- Develop any public use limitations that are necessary to facilitate the livestock grazing operations in this area in cooperation with the private landowner.
  - Locate, designate, and sign appropriate parking areas. Provide adequate signing to inform the public of the limited parking availability near the gate.
  - Locate, designate and sign appropriate camping areas along Porcupine Creek in Devil's Canyon.
  - Develop a "Limits of Acceptable Change" monitoring program to assess acceptable levels of public use and to monitor resource conditions in Devil's Canyon.
  - Pursue development of a legal public access route from T.58N., R.93W. Sec. 30SE1/4 along an old jeep trail through the NE1/4 of Sec. 31 and the west ½ of Sec. 32 and from T.57N., R.93W. Sec. 8NE1/4 to the Devil's Canyon gate in Sec. 9NW1/4.
- ❑ Seasonal Closure
    - Install and/or maintain gates at all proposed seasonal closure gate locations shown on Map 1: Little Mountain Planning Area – Alternative 1. The actual gate locations will need to be determined on-the-ground during implementation to ensure adequate vehicle turn around points. Additional gates would be installed as necessary to enforce the seasonal closure.
    - Prepare signs to post on each gate and on the main entry points into the planning area to inform the public of the purpose of the seasonal closure, the closure dates, and the allowable uses.
    - Distribute a news release to the local newspapers to explain and notify the public of the implementation of the seasonal closure.
- ❑ Continue to pursue reciprocal right-of-way for administrative access through the Moss Ranch to the Bighorn National Forest.
  - ❑ Work with the Wyoming State Trails Program to develop a volunteer trail patrol program to enhance public education and enforcement of the route designations in the planning area.
  - ❑ Develop main entry point pullouts and install kiosks following necessary wildlife and cultural resource evaluations.
  - ❑ Work with the Worland Field Office Zone engineering and operations staff to maintain and prevent rutting and erosion on the main access road to the cave area.
  - ❑ Pursue easements across private land, or identify alternate access routes where necessary to ensure future public access to the Little Mountain area.

- ❑ Clarify the land ownership boundary between the Bureau of Land Management and the National Park Service, Bighorn Canyon National Recreation Area on the west side of the Little Mountain planning area (T.57N., R.94W. Sec. 4, 9, 10, 15, 22, 23)..
- ❑ Continue integrated weed control efforts in conjunction with recreational trail and road maintenance.

Project ideas for future consideration:

- ❑ During the revision of the Cody RMP, consider opportunities to designate one or more OHV “open areas” within the Cody Field Office Area.

## **Maps**

Map 1: Little Mountain Planning Area – Alternative 1

Map 2: Little Mountain Planning Area - Alternative 2

Map 3: Final Little Mountain Travel Management Map

## **Figures**

Figures 1: Little Mountain Planning Area

## **Tables**

Table 1: AMP and S&G Completion Table

**Appendix 1**

**MANAGEMENT OF BLM-ADMINISTERED PUBLIC LANDS WITHIN  
THE CODY RESOURCE MANAGEMENT PLAN PLANNING AREA  
THAT MEET THE WILD AND SCENIC RIVERS SUITABILITY  
FACTORS.”**

**JANUARY 23, 2003**



# MANAGEMENT OF BLM-ADMINISTERED PUBLIC LANDS WITHIN THE CODY RESOURCE MANAGEMENT PLAN PLANNING AREA THAT MEET THE WILD AND SCENIC RIVERS SUITABILITY FACTORS

January 23, 2003

The interim management prescriptions described in this document are meant to provide temporary or interim protection of the Wild and Scenic Rivers (WSR) values on suitable waterway areas prior to the completion of the Cody Resource Management Plan (RMP) Revision. Included are management objectives, management actions, and appropriate allocations of land and resource uses that will maintain the outstandingly remarkable values and tentative classifications identified for Porcupine Creek and the Deer Creek, Oasis Spring Creek, and Trout Creek tributaries to Porcupine Creek. Pursuant to the Wild and Scenic Rivers Act (WSRA) of 1968, as amended, until the public reviews are completed and final decisions are made on the WSR eligibility and suitability determinations, no uses of the reviewed Bureau of Land Management (BLM)-administered public land surfaces (public lands) will be authorized which could impair any outstandingly remarkable values they may contain, or would otherwise reduce or destroy their potential eligibility classification or suitability for consideration for inclusion in the National Wild and Scenic Rivers System (NWSRS).

## **I. WILD AND SCENIC RIVERS REVIEW PROCESS**

In conducting the WSR review process, application of the WSR eligibility criteria, determining the tentative WSR classifications, and the application of the WSR suitability factors focused on the public lands within a one-half mile wide corridor along the reviewed waterway segment (i.e., approximately one quarter mile wide along each bank of the waterway along the length of the review segment). The public lands within and adjacent to this corridor will be considered in future site specific, activity or management implementation planning to fulfill the stated management objective. Following is a summary of the outcome of the WSR review for the waterway segments that were found to be eligible within the Cody RMP planning area.

The public lands along the reviewed segment of Porcupine Creek and the Deer Creek, Oasis Spring Creek, and Trout Creek tributaries to Porcupine Creek were found to meet the WSR suitability factors to be given further consideration for inclusion in the NWSRS. The public lands along the reviewed segments of the Clarks Fork of the Yellowstone River, although found to be eligible, do not meet the WSR suitability factors. This determination was based upon the potential conflict with development of historical and existing water rights, opposition by the State of Wyoming to including more of the Clarks Fork of the Yellowstone River in the NWSRS, and the conflict with State of Wyoming contingencies in concurring with the WSR designation of the upper reaches of the Clarks Fork of the Yellowstone River within the Shoshone National Forest.

## **II. MANAGEMENT OBJECTIVE**

The management objective for the public lands that meet the WSR suitability factors is to maintain or enhance their outstandingly remarkable values and WSR classification, until Congress considers them for possible designation. The interim management prescriptions for the suitable waterways in the Cody RMP planning area apply only to the waterway corridor which extends the length of the identified waterway segment and includes the waterway area, its immediate environment, and an average of no more than one quarter mile (1,320 feet) from the ordinary high water mark on both sides of the waterway. This boundary is preliminary and, by Section 3(b) of the WSRSA, may vary on either side of the waterway and be narrower or wider as long as the total corridor width averages no more than 320 acres (half of a mile or 2,640 feet wide) per river mile, and can be delineated by legally identifiable lines (e.g., survey or property lines) or some form of on-the-ground physical feature (e.g., canyon rims, roads, etc.) which provide the basis for protecting the waterway's outstandingly remarkable values. Since the suitable waterways within the Cody RMP planning area (Porcupine Creek and its related tributaries) are located within deep canyons, which are capable of both supporting and protecting the outstandingly remarkable values, the corridor boundary is delineated by the canyon rims, except in cases where "rim-to-rim" exceeds an average of half a mile. Final boundary delineation will be made if and when Congress decides to designate the waterway segments under review.

### **Porcupine Creek and Associated Tributaries (Trout Creek, Oasis Spring Creek, and Deer Creek)**

Three public land parcels along Porcupine Creek (involving 9.7 miles of the creek), one public land parcel along Deer Creek (involving 1.3 miles of the creek), one public land parcel along Oasis Spring Creek (involving 2.4 miles of the creek), and one public land parcel along Trout Creek (involving 0.9 miles of the creek) were found to meet the WSR suitability factors to be given further consideration for inclusion in the NWSRS. Figure D1 is a map showing public lands involved while Figures D2 - D5 are pictures of certain sections of the suitable waterway segment. The public lands along 6.4 miles of Porcupine Creek, 2.4 miles of Oasis Spring Creek, and 0.9 miles of Trout Creek are tentatively classified as wild. The public lands along 3.3 miles of Porcupine Creek (upstream from the confluence with Deer Creek) and along 1.3 miles of Deer Creek are tentatively classified as scenic.

**Interim Management for Wild Classification:** Interim management practices for the three public land parcels along Porcupine Creek, one public land parcel along Oasis Spring Creek, and one public land parcel along Trout Creek meeting the wild classification will focus on maintaining or enhancing the outstandingly remarkable scenic, recreational, and cultural values and maintaining the relatively primitive, pristine, rugged, and unaltered character of the area. Allowable management practices might include construction of minor structures for such purposes as: improvement of fish and game habitat; grazing protection from fire, insects, or disease; and rehabilitation or stabilization of damaged resources, provided the area will remain natural appearing and the practices or structures are compatible and in harmony with the environment. Developments such as trail bridges, occasional fencing, natural-appearing water diversions, ditches, flow measurement or other water management devices, and similar facilities may be permitted if they are unobtrusive and do not have a significant direct and adverse effect on the natural character of the waterway area.

Historic and prehistoric resource sites will be identified, evaluated and protected in a manner compatible with the management objectives of the waterway and in accordance with applicable regulations and policies. Where appropriate, temporary cultural and paleontological activities (e.g., inventory, recordation, sampling, testing, stabilization, rehabilitation, and reconstruction) may be allowed on the public lands, if the outstandingly remarkable, waterway-related values are maintained.

The public lands will be closed to mineral leasing and related exploration and development activities. Existing mineral leases on these lands will be allowed to expire. The public lands will be closed to mineral location (e.g., filing of mining claims and related exploration and development) and the extraction of saleable minerals. A withdrawal from land disposal, mineral location, and entry under the land laws will be pursued. Valid existing rights (existing mining claims) will be recognized and subject to existing (e.g., 43 CFR 3809) regulations. Reasonable mining claim lease access will be permitted for valid existing claims and existing mineral leases. Any mineral activity will be conducted in a manner that minimizes surface disturbance, water sedimentation, pollution, and visual impairment. The public lands will be closed to recreational dredging for minerals, such as gold.

Hiking trails may be built, “by hand labor,” if there is a demand for them and they conform to the management objective for these lands. Some minor recreation developments (e.g., signs, kiosks) may be allowed on the public lands so long as there are no substantial adverse effects to the natural appearance of the lands within the waterway corridor and their immediate environment. Some larger-scale recreation developments (e.g., trail-head parking area) adjacent to but outside the waterway corridor may be allowed.

The public lands will be closed to land disposal actions. Exchanges of public lands “outside the corridor” could be considered for acquiring private or state lands within the corridor or between the public land parcels along the creek; however, public lands within the corridor will not be exchanged. If BLM obtains private lands along Porcupine Creek,

those lands in the waterway corridor will be automatically subject to this interim management plan.

The public lands are within a right-of-way avoidance area where transmission lines, natural gas lines, water lines, etc., will be allowed only under certain circumstances. New transmission lines, natural gas lines, water lines, etc., are discouraged unless specifically authorized by other plans, orders, or laws. Where no reasonable alternate location exists, additional or new facilities should be restricted to existing rights-of-way. Where new rights-of-way are unavoidable, locations and construction techniques will be selected to minimize adverse effects on wild waterway area related values and fully evaluated during the site selection process.

No development of hydroelectric power facilities would be permitted. No new flood control dams, levees, or other works allowed in the channel or waterway corridor. All water supply dams and major diversions are prohibited. The natural appearance and essentially primitive character of the waterway area must be maintained. Federal agency groundwater development for range, wildlife, recreation or administrative facilities may be permitted if there are no adverse effects on outstandingly remarkable waterway-related values.

In general, the public lands will be closed to motorized and non-motorized vehicles. However, the Authorized Officer may allow motorized vehicle use on occasion for activities such as search and rescue; law enforcement; treatment of noxious weeds; fire suppression, presuppression, and prevention activities; or for other purposes as he deems appropriate. The existing planning decision in the Cody RMP is that vehicle use is limited to designated roads and trails. This decision has not been implemented on the ground. When the decision is implemented, consideration will be given to not designating two-track ways or single-track trails as open for use by motorized vehicles. Mountain bike use would be prohibited in those waterway corridors found suitable for wild classification. Recreationists will be required to "pack it out"; there will be no garbage collection facilities.

Management and suppression of fires within the waterway corridor will be carried out in a manner compatible with contiguous Federal lands. On wildfires, suppression methods will be used that minimize long-term impacts on the waterway and waterway area. Presuppression and prevention activities will be conducted in a manner that reflects management objectives for a wild waterway area. Prescribed fires may be used to maintain or restore ecological condition.

The public lands will be closed to commercial timber sales or harvesting. Cutting of trees may be allowed with written permission or in association with safety and environmental protection requirements (such as clearing trails, visitor safety, hazardous fuels reduction and fire suppression activities).

Agricultural use is restricted to a limited amount of domestic livestock grazing and trailing to the extent practiced prior to WSR eligibility/suitability determination. Range improvements will only be allowed if they are compatible with objectives for the wild waterway classification.

The public lands are open only to vegetation treatment or manipulation (other than prescribed fire) that will restore and/or enhance the outstandingly scenic, recreational, and/or cultural values and are compatible with a wild waterway area. Seeding would be limited only to native species that will restore natural systems. Undesirable and exotic species within the waterway corridor could be removed by hand or through backpack/hand application of appropriate herbicides. The Authorized Officer may allow motorized vehicle use for control of noxious weeds.

The public lands are managed under a Class II Visual Resource Management (VRM) classification except for a small area near Oasis Spring Creek that is Class III.

The control of forest and rangeland pests, diseases, and noxious weed infestations will be carried out in a manner compatible with the intent of the WSRA and management objectives of contiguous Federal lands.

The construction and maintenance of minor structures for the protection, conservation, rehabilitation or enhancement of fish and wildlife habitat are acceptable provided they do not affect the free-flowing characteristics of the waterway, are compatible with the waterway's classification, that the area remains natural in appearance, and the practices or structures harmonize with the surrounding environment.

**Interim Management for Scenic Classification:** Interim management practices for the one public land parcel along Porcupine Creek and the one public land parcel along Deer Creek meeting the scenic classification will focus on maintaining or enhancing the outstandingly remarkable scenic, recreational, and cultural values and the relatively unmodified character of the area in a near-natural setting. Some intrusions on the public lands involved may be allowed if they do not adversely affect maintaining the scenic classification.

Historic and prehistoric resource sites will be identified, evaluated and protected in a manner compatible with the management objectives of the waterway and in accordance with applicable regulations and policies. Where appropriate, temporary cultural and paleontological activities (e.g., inventory, recordation, sampling, testing, stabilization, rehabilitation, and reconstruction) may be allowed on the public lands, if the outstandingly remarkable, waterway-related values are maintained.

Subject to existing regulations (e.g., 43 CFR 3809) and any future regulations that the Secretary of the Interior may prescribe to protect the values of waterways included in the NWSRS, new mining claims, and mineral leases can be allowed. All mineral activity on federally administered land must be conducted in a manner that minimizes surface

disturbance, water sedimentation and pollution, and visual impairment. Reasonable mining claim and mineral lease access will be permitted. Mining claims, subject to valid existing rights, within the scenic waterway area boundary can be patented only as to the mineral estate and not the surface estate (subject to proof of discovery prior to the effective date of designation).

Geophysical exploration will be limited to foot access and use of surface cables on the public lands unless the Authorized Officer allows use of motorized vehicles such as motorcycles, ATVs, trucks, or helicopters. Surface charges may be allowed if site-specific analyses determine no permanent adverse impacts would occur.

Recreation developments and wildlife and range improvements may be allowed on the public lands so long as there are no substantial adverse effects to the natural appearance of the lands within the waterway corridor and their immediate environment. Hiking trails may be built if there is a demand for them and they conform to the objective for the scenic classification.

The public lands will be closed to land disposal actions. Exchanges of public lands “outside the corridor” could be considered for acquiring private or state lands within the corridor or between the public land parcels along the creek; however, public lands within the corridor will not be exchanged.

The public lands are within a right-of-way avoidance area where transmission lines, natural gas lines, water lines, etc., will be allowed only under certain circumstances. New transmission lines, natural gas lines, water lines, etc., are discouraged unless specifically authorized by other plans, orders, or laws. Where no reasonable alternate location exists, additional or new facilities should be restricted to existing rights-of-way. Where new rights-of-way are unavoidable, locations and construction techniques will be selected to minimize adverse effects on scenic waterway area related values and fully evaluated during the site selection process.

No development of hydroelectric power facilities would be permitted. Flood control dams and levees would be prohibited. All water supply dams and major diversions are prohibited. Maintenance of existing facilities and construction of some new structures would be permitted provided that the area remains natural in appearance and the practices or structures harmonize with the surrounding environment.

Motorized and non-motorized vehicles are restricted to using designated roads and trails. However, the Authorized Officer may allow motorized vehicle use on other than designated roads and trails on occasion for activities such as search and rescue; law enforcement; treatment of noxious weeds; fire suppression, presuppression, and prevention activities; or for other purposes as is deemed appropriate. Mountain biking is allowed to the extent that no adverse effects occur.

Roads or trails may occasionally bridge the waterway area and short stretches of conspicuous or long stretches of inconspicuous and well-screened roads could be allowed. Maintenance of existing roads and trails, and any new roads or trails, will be

based on the type of use for which the roads/trails are constructed and the type of use that will occur in the waterway area.

Management and suppression of fires within the waterway corridor will be carried out in a manner compatible with contiguous Federal lands. On wildfires, suppression methods will be used that minimize long-term impacts on the waterway and waterway area. Presuppression and prevention activities will be conducted in a manner that reflects management objectives for a scenic waterway area. Prescribed fires may be used to maintain or restore ecological condition.

The public lands will be closed to commercial timber sales or harvesting. Cutting of trees may be allowed with written permission or in association with safety and environmental protection requirements (such as clearing trails, visitor safety, hazardous fuels reduction and fire suppression activities). Agricultural use is restricted to a limited amount of domestic livestock grazing and trailing to the extent practiced prior to WSR eligibility/suitability determination. Range improvements will only be allowed if they are compatible with objectives for the scenic waterway classification.

The public lands are open only to vegetation treatment or manipulation (other than prescribed fire) that will restore and/or enhance the outstandingly scenic, recreational, and/or cultural values and are compatible with a scenic waterway area. Seeding would be limited only to native species that will restore natural systems. Undesirable and exotic species within the waterway corridor could be removed by hand, through backpack/hand application of appropriate herbicides, or other means that remain compatible with the scenic classification. The Authorized Officer may allow motorized vehicle use for control of noxious weeds.

The public lands are managed under a Class II Visual Resource Management (VRM) classification.

The control of forest and rangeland pests, diseases, and noxious weed infestations will be carried out in a manner compatible with the intent of the WSRA and management objectives of contiguous Federal lands.

The construction and maintenance of minor structures for the protection, conservation, rehabilitation or enhancement of fish and wildlife habitat are acceptable provided they do not affect the free-flowing characteristics of the waterway, are compatible with the waterway's classification, that the area remains natural in appearance, and the practices or structures harmonize with the surrounding environment.